

From: Thomas M. Lahey
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 11/16/01 10:45pm
Subject: Microsoft & my experience competing against them

Good Day,

First a little history.

My company, Lahey Computer Systems, Inc., an Arizona Corporation (April 1967) licensed to do business in Nevada, has competed against Microsoft beginning in September 1986 and lasting until Microsoft abandoned the Fortran market a couple of years ago when they worked something out with DEC (that's probably an interesting event all by itself).

DEC took whatever Microsoft "gave" them and created a powerful product that we competed against with modest success, i.e., we stayed in business. DEC was acquired by COMPAQ and nothing changed in the market place. COMPAQ "gave" Intel the Fortran business and now you can download what used to be the DEC Fortran language system for free if you aren't going to use it for commercial development.

Now let's return to competing against Microsoft.

1) Microsoft gave their Fortran away to major users. Of course, you must have been using Windows to qualify for this "gift."

2) Resellers were given discounts based on the total number/dollar of all Microsoft products sold. So if a reseller sold 9 Windows and 1 Fortran, the discount was for 10 units.

Both of these practices violated the spirit, if not the letter, of what IBM had to do when they were forced to unbundle their operating system software from the hardware.

Finally, as XP has validated, Microsoft sees something good and then decides that good thing is a part of the Windows Operating System -- and they don't even do it well.

I believe the intended settlement, a kiss on the wrist if I ever saw one, total misses the point that Microsoft was guilty of anti-trust practices and NOTHING happens.

Thanks for the opportunity to finally say what has been on my mind for some time.

Regards,
Tom
Thomas M Lahey, CEO/Owner
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CC: Bill Lassaline